

5: Levchine

RQ2 Kazak RQ2

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[For the role of the Kazak as dependents of the Russians, see category
116, pp. 23-163.]

[137 cont.]

175 Having spoken in passing of the ancient Kazaks' way of life to show their resemblances to those of today, let us return to what the Oriental writers teach us about them.

This people has been known in Asia for a very long time. As one of the branches of that very numerous race, the Turks, it is no less ancient than the Naimans or the Kirgiz, or any of the Asiatic peoples of the same race. The Kazaks came under the domination of Chingis Khan, and after the death of the conqueror passed in appanage to his son Djuchi, but although they belonged to the Golden Horde, they kept their own khans. For this reason they were sometimes under the dominion of their own main chiefs, and sometimes were joined to the Chagatai horde, that of Almalyk, or that of Tashkent, which was later called the Mogul Ulus.

After the weakening of the powerful states of Djuchi and Chagatai, internal disputes arose within many of the descent lines [races] belonging to the sons and descendants of Chingis Khan, especially among the nomads. The Uzbeks, who had seized Maverannahr and Khorezm, became the most powerful. But not all the peoples contributing to the disorder came under their sway. Some of them joined the Crimean Tatars, others the Mogul uluses, still others the true Tatars, that is, those of Kazan, and finally some joined the Kazak horde. All this took place after the fall of the Golden Horde. Later, when the Uzbeks split up, many of their branches fused with the Kazak horde. In this manner two powerful states were formed at the beginning [138] of the 16th century, in the Kipchak and Chete steppes. The first of these states, the Mogul Ulus, was headed by Khan Dadam, while the second, ruled by Arslan, khan of the Kazaks, was so powerful that it could raise an army of 400,000 men. This is found in the writings of Sultan Baber, founder of the famous empire of the Grand Mogul in India. He gave one of his nieces in marriage to Arslan Khan and was an eyewitness to his power.

175 In this period several branches or tribes of many of the peo-
631 ples known in the history of the Orient, and which broke away
727 from the Golden Horde, were united with the Kazaks, either voluntarily or by force. It was at this time that the Kipchaks,

[141 cont.]

175 Kalmuks (3), was taken prisoner with Seidak.
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3. This is what it says in Karamzin, op. cit., Vol. X, p. 98, yet the bringing together of these two titles seems very extraordinary to us.

This event not only gave Tsar Fedor the power to revive his father's plans concerning the Kirghiz-Kazaks, but also the right to call himself their sovereign.

175 Tevkel, who wished to free his nephew, sent an ambassador
648 to Moscow in 1594 with a letter to the Tsar in which he begged
636 the latter to accept him with all his horde as subjects and to send him Uraz Mehmet (4).

4. See Kirghiz [i. e. Kazak] matters, 1794 and 1795, in the archives of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Moscow and the reference to them in Karamzin, op. cit., Vol. X, note 332.

Knowing the customs and habits of the Kirghiz-Kazaks, one can be certain that this proposition was no more than a [142] meaningless promise in order to free Uraz Mehmet, one which Tevkel had no intention of keeping whether his nephew were given up to him or not. This he evinced when the Tsar replied to him by letter in 1795 that he accepted him with all his horde as his subjects and that he was sending him firearms, but that as proof of his allegiance he required him to force the khan of Bukhara to make peace and to compel Kuchum to submit. He promised to set Uraz Mehmet (1) at liberty as soon as Tevkel presented one of

1. Godunov later named this prince tsar of Kasimov. Karamzin, op. cit., Vol. IX, p. 22..

[142 cont.]

175 his sons, the Tsarevitch or Sultan Hussein, as hostage in his
648 place (2).
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2. For this letter, see the packet [envoi]
preserved in the archives of the Ministry
of Foreign Affairs.

This letter was conveyed by Tevkel's ambassador, who was
accompanied by Veliamin-Stepanov, interpreter for the Tatar
language.

What sort of news Stepanov may have brought to the Tsar
upon his return from the horde is unknown. It is only known that
his journey produced no political advantage for Russia, that
neither Tevkel nor his successors were Russian subjects until the
18th century, and that they neither served Russia nor rendered her
[21] any kind of help. On the contrary, they attacked her new
colonies in Siberia.

175 One must believe, however, that those who lived on the
648 frontiers of the new Russian territorial possessions must have had
439 frequent relations with them, as did our merchants, at that time,
and that they acquired accurate knowledge about their country.
For in the book Bolshoi Chertezh /The Great Description, which
according to the well-founded evidence of Karamzin must have
been written during the reign of Tsar Fedor Ivanovich (3) /1584-

3. Karamzin, op. cit., Vol. X,
p. 259.

1598/, many dwelling places which existed on the lands of the
Kazak horde are spoken of in great detail.

[13] [143] As this book is rare, we believe it is not irrelevant to
quote that which concerns the steppes of the Kirghiz-Kazaks:

"And from the Sea of Khvalymsk (Caspian) to the Blue Sea
(Aral), toward the east of summer, it is 250 versts /266 km./.

"And along the Blue Sea to the mouth of the Syr /Darya
River/ it is 280 versts /299 km./, and across, by the Blue Sea,

[153 cont.]

[175] latter, like that of the Volga Kalmuks, did not compare with the
 [166] power of the Dzungars, nevertheless the lands which the Kazaks
 [724] had seized belonged to them, and consequently they wished to
 [721] give no peace to the people who had taken the lands from them.
 Expeditions for revenge and constant raids were planned for the
 future and began from this moment. The Cossacks of the Ural,
 [448] new neighbors of the Kazaks, promised to do the same. It was
 necessary to seek a defender against so many enemies; it was
 necessary to ask help from Russia. Perhaps this thought had often
 come to the minds of the sultans and the wisest elders, but it was
 difficult not only to put it into execution, but also to propose it
 to the people. Although we find in the archives of the Ministry
 of Foreign Affairs a detailed account of the articles proposed
 orally in 1726 by Kaibakar, deputy of the Kazaks, who [154]
 came to ask the protection of Russia for the Little Horde, in the
 name of the elders Sugur, Iedikbai, Khadjibai, Tiak-Kulybai,
 and others, nevertheless this communication had no decisive
 sequel. Judging by the names of the elders who sent Kaibakar,
 one is forced to think that they were too weak and inconspicuous
 to win the people over to them, and their mission remained un-
 successful. It is not known what suddenly led them to take this
 step, but one can be sure that most of the Kazaks were displeased
 by it. They preferred their barbarous freedom to any kind of order
 [636] and to dependence upon laws, nor had they forgotten that the
 [187] tenets of their religion commanded them to regard the Russians as
 infidels.

[648] These two obstacles seemed to make the free union of the
 [634] Kazak hordes with a Christian empire impossible. But unfortunate
 circumstances, endless dissensions, bloodshed, and the clever
 mind of Khan Abulkhair changed the inclinations of the people
 to the point where, after a feeble resistance, he decided to carry
 out a measure, based on the individual views of a single man, to
 which he could not have been moved by love of the public weal.
 I speak here of the voluntary submission of the Kazaks to Empress
 Anna, an event which took place in 1730, as we shall see below.

[128] Before coming to the description of this revolution, which
 is so important, we should note here that it forms the line of

[156 cont.]

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[462] a power over the Great Horde which he did not possess, to make himself important in the eyes of the Russian court and thus to acquire influence over the entire Kazak nation.

Empress Anna's letter patent of July 10, 1734 proves Abulkhair's deceit. First of all, this letter is presented in the name of various beys and elders and not in the name of Djulbars, who was then commander of the entire Great Horde, as is known from several documents and Rychkov's History of Orenburg. Furthermore, in the letter patent it says: "Our subject Abulkhair Khan has reported to us as a faithful subject that he has already accepted you among the ranks of our subjects, and for this purpose he has sent your deputies Aralbai and Arasgeldy-Batyr to our court." These words are founded upon Abulkhair's writings and the oral declarations made by his son, but neither the one nor the other promoted anything but falsehoods. On the one hand, it is recognized that Abulkhair, who lived a long distance from the Great Horde, could never have any influence upon it. On the other hand, we see that this horde never took an oath of loyalty to Russia and was not counted among her subjects. In the third place, it must be noted that the head of the Orenburg expedition, Kirilov, who received this letter patent at the moment of his departure from Petersburg, did not even send it to its destination. It is probable that he felt this move to be [57] indecorous when he arrived at the border and was able to appreciate the truth of the circumstances mentioned in this document.

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439 The second proposal to admit the Kazaks of the Great Horde as Russian subjects is much more probable than the first, though little more sincere. This was made in 1738, not by a man claiming to be chief of the Great Horde but by Djulbars, the true and legitimate chief of this horde. Having learned of the founding of a Russian city at the mouth of the Ori River and the opening of trade with the Kazaks of the Middle and the Little Hordes, he sent to ask for the same benefits, and to help [157] attain his end, he proposed making not only his own people Russian subjects, but also the neighboring nations, if it was

[313 cont.]

Chapter V. On the Possibility of Making the
Kirghiz-Kazaks Adopt Sedentary Customs.

631 The division of territory, of which we spoke in relation to the
[636] camps of each tribe, might cause one to believe it possible to
[311] establish each tribe or each descent line on the land it occupies,
[177] in fixed positions, since it recalls to a certain point, the idea of
territorial property. But this idea vanishes when one comes to
consider the nature of the country and the moral inclinations of
its inhabitants.

233 The care of the herds and their propagation is, as has been
said before, the favorite and cherished occupation of the Kazaks,
as well as the source of all their wealth. In order to sustain this
branch of economy in the flourishing state in which it is at
[311] present, vast pasture lands are indispensable, and considering
[181] the inclination of nomadic peoples for brigandage, these pastures
[579] cannot have fixed limits, and in addition, they are divided into
two classes, summer and winter pastures. An open plain, smooth
and rich [314] in fodder, is excellent for the livestock in summer,
but during the winter confining hills are necessary, especially for
the ewes, to protect them from the winds and storms, and also
sand which absorbs moisture and on which, therefore, the snow
[222] remains for a shorter time, as well as reeds and heather, which
[372] provide good nourishment for the camels and good fuel for the
shepherds.

311 This is why every tribe has its winter and summer pastures,
233 the former usually in the south. Thus the Baganaly and the
Naimans, who spend the summer on the Ishim or the Turgai rivers,
withdraw in winter to the Kuvan-Darya, while the Djappas people
leave the market of Troitsk in November to go toward the shores
of the Syr [Darya]. The same could be said for many others.

361 It is clear from this that the Kazaks must either have two different
439 camps according to the seasons or reduce the number of their
animals. In this last case they would do harm not only to them-
selves but also to their neighbors, whose trade relations with them
have the sole purpose of exchanging livestock.

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311 On the other hand, it cannot be assumed that all the Kazaks
241 can apply themselves to agriculture, for aside from their aversion
for this kind of life, they have too little arable land, as one can
see in the geographic section of this work [untranslated]. In addi-
tion, even assuming that these nomads did occupy themselves
with the cultivation of land, would the products they grew com-
pensate for the reduction of the herds? All the peoples who border
[243] on the Kazak steppes need livestock, and they produce enough
grain so that it is always a better bargain for them than grain which
could be brought from far away. So that if neither the Russians,
nor the Chinese, nor the inhabitants of Kokand, nor the Bukharans,
nor the Khivans will pay the Kazaks the price of their labors as
agriculturalists, what will the latter have to give them in exchange
for the manufactured products which they cannot do without and
which they pay for today with livestock?

[175] [315] Let us add to this picture the physical revolutions to
[132] which the surface of the Kazak steppe is subject. The Dimas and
[312] Bascatis [rivers] which, according to Ptolemy, watered these lands,
no longer exist. The Kenderlik [River], which indicated in the
Bolshoi Chertezh, is no longer there. The Kizil-Darya, so often
discussed by Abulgazi Baiadur Khan and which is still seen on the
old maps, has completely disappeared. The Yany-Darya, which
was born, so to speak, in our day, has already ceased to flow.
The Aksakal-Barby lakes have diminished greatly. The high points
of Sari-Bulak and Kuk-Tirnak, which used to be washed by the
Aral Sea according to old Kazaks, are now at a distance of eight
hours walk away. Many tiny lakes and wells have dried up entirely.
Finally, in regions which are completely deprived of water one
sees huge ruins which indicate the former existence of a large
population. These phenomena are nothing to a nomadic people,
because they move their location all the time, but they are
destructive for a sedentary people.

181 Let us now recall the prejudice which has been implanted, and
152 is unfortunately well fixed, and has spread among the Kazaks,
namely that they will lose their freedom (1) the moment they leave

1. The Russian government has built houses
for the Kazak sultans (as for Ablai and others),

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often as its own expense, and has used every means of persuasion to induce certain individuals among them to settle down, at least to provide an example. But all these efforts have been futile.

579 their tents to live in houses. Next let us examine the ethical rela-
627 tions of the tribes and descent lines. Vengeance carried out by
628 one individual against another, the participation of their families
578 in it, their auls, their /clan/ divisions, and sometimes their tribes, and the perpetual reprisals which result from this, sometimes re-
166 quire hundreds of families to move away from their dwelling places and to withdraw much farther away, forever, in order to evade the persecutions of their enemies.

721 It is thus that the entire Karakalpak nation, which had lived independently under the orders of its own khans on the [316] shores of the Syr [Darya], lost its existence as a state in the last years of the 18th century and was forced to disperse as a consequence of the frequent attacks of the Kazaks and the acts of vengeance that they carried out to wipe away old injuries.

101 In 1740 a large part of the Middle Horde, with its khan, Abul Mahmet, occupied the eastern shores of the Khobda River. Abulkhair lived most often on the shores of the Syr [Darya] or the Kuvan. This is why he wrote to Nepluev in Orenburg in 1742:

166 "I am with the Little Horde on the Syr [Darya], and the Middle Horde is near you, General." Today it is the opposite. None of the tribes of the Middle Horde are near Orenburg. Several of the auls of the Alimuly descent line in 1821 even came to make their winter camps on the banks of the Ilek, although they had always
578 had them on the Syr [Darya], as a result of internal dissensions, during which their enemies were supported by the khan of Khiva.

At the same time several auls which habitually camped near the
361 Russian border withdrew toward the land of Khiva. All this leads
181 us to the conclusion that the present way of life of the Kazaks and
636 the nature of the land they inhabit do not permit them to form
177 permanent establishments, and that for their own advantage as

[316 cont.]

36/ well as that of the neighboring states, and especially of Russia,
18/ it is to be desired that they not change their condition of being
● 636 rich herders for that of poor farmers, since their steppes seem,
177 as it were, to be made for nomadic peoples. Good order and peace
will not be made to reign in their tribes by establishing villages.
There will be no success in making them appreciate the fortunate
results of peace except in training them in obedience and especially
in observing rules of strict equity with regard to them.

Chart I

Genealogy of the First and Main Branch of the Kirghiz-Kazak Khans
(The earliest founders of the descent groups are two brothers)

